

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 1452
By Hargrove

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Mark Martin, NASCAR driver and legend.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly is pleased to specially honor and commend those successful and talented athletes who, through their magnificent exploits, have established themselves as premier competitors in their respective sports; and

WHEREAS, one such athlete is Mark Martin, who has achieved an extraordinary level of success during an estimable career in NASCAR; and

WHEREAS, the favorite NASCAR driver of Representative Jere L. Hargrove, Mark Martin is a true racing legend, and he will be retiring after the 2006 NEXTEL Cup Racing season; and

WHEREAS, Representative Hargrove will also be retiring from his legislative post after the adjournment of the 104th General Assembly, a fitting finish to two historic careers; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, Mark Martin began racing when he was only fifteen years old, and he won his first race in only his third start at a local dirt track in Arkansas; he went on to win the Arkansas State Championship that same year; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, Mark Martin began racing in the American Stock Association (ASA) series, where he competed against such drivers as Rusty Wallace, Bobby Allison, and Dick Trickle; and

WHEREAS, named the ASA Rookie of the Year in 1977, Mark Martin went on to win three consecutive ASA Championships in 1978, 1979, and 1980; and

WHEREAS, Mark Martin competed in five NASCAR Cup races in 1981, and he completed his first full NASCAR Cup season in 1982, finishing in the Top Ten in eight races; and

WHEREAS, despite his astounding success, Mark Martin did not receive payment from his sponsor, and consequently, he was forced to auction off everything in his shop just to compete in a limited NASCAR Cup schedule in 1983; and

WHEREAS, Mark Martin returned to ASA series racing in 1984, and he won the ASA Championship for the fourth time in 1986; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, Jack Roush began his own NASCAR Cup Team and selected Mark Martin to be his driver; and

WHEREAS, on October 22, 1989, Mark Martin won his first NASCAR Cup race at North Carolina Motor Speedway; and

WHEREAS, achieving countless records and receiving innumerable awards, Mark Martin has 35 career Nextel Cup wins, 228 Top Five finishes, and 365 Top Ten finishes; and

WHEREAS, Mark Martin has finished 2nd in Season Point Standings four times (1990, 1994, 1998, and 2002); and

WHEREAS, in addition, Mark Martin has claimed four ASA Titles and five International Race of Champions (IROC) Titles (1994, 1996, 1997, 1998, and 2005), making him the only driver in history to win five IROC Championships; and

WHEREAS, in three of the past four years, Mark Martin has finished in the Top Five Season Points Standings, and he has finished second in total points on four separate occasions; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to honors and accolades, Mark Martin was named Driver of the Year by the National Motor Sports Press Association in 1989, and he was selected to the American Auto Racing Writers and Broadcasters Association All-American Team in 1990; and

WHEREAS, Mark Martin received the Busch Pole Award in 1991; was voted Top Professional Athlete for the Month of August in 1993 by the S. Rae Hickik Pro Athlete of the Year Board; and won the 1998 Gatorade Front Runner Award; and

WHEREAS, a state-of-the-art museum recently opened in Batesville, Arkansas, to commemorate the career of Mark Martin, a testament to the immeasurable contributions he has made to the sport of NASCAR and racing in general; and

WHEREAS, Mark Martin has achieved a premier level of success in competition while showing the highest degree of character both on and off the race track; and

WHEREAS, Mark Martin's perseverance, determination, work ethic, and talent have not only made possible an extraordinary NASCAR racing career, but also surely bode well for his success in every future enterprise; and

WHEREAS, Mark Martin epitomizes the spirit of volunteerism and commitment to excellence that are characteristic of all true Tennesseans; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly finds it appropriate to acknowledge and applaud Mark Martin's amazing career and congratulate him upon his upcoming retirement; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we honor and commend Mark Martin upon his extraordinary NASCAR racing career, congratulate him upon his upcoming retirement, and wish him every success in all future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.